



## TOWN OF NEEDHAM

TOWN HALL  
1471 Highland Avenue  
Needham, MA 02492-2669

Office of the  
TOWN MANAGER

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TO: Mark Gluesing, Chair  
Community Preservation Committee  
FROM: Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager  
CC: Board of Selectmen  
Patty Carey, Director of Park and Recreation  
Rick Merson, Director of Public Works  
Ed Olsen, Parks and Forestry Superintendent  
Christopher Coleman, Assistant Town Manager/Operations  
David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance  
Tad Staley, President, Bay Colony Rail Trail Association  
RE: CPA Applications – Fiscal Year 2012  
DATE: August 15, 2012

At its meeting on August 14, 2012, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to endorse an application for Community Preservation funding for the Greene's Field Improvement Project in the amount of \$445,000. It is anticipated that the requested funding will be supplemented with \$50,000 provided through private fundraising efforts. The Greene's Field Improvement Project includes the replacement of the iconic play structure, as well as a comprehensive reconstruction and renovation of the park and playfield areas.

The Board of Selectmen also voted unanimously to endorse a proposal for use of CPA Administrative funds in the amount of approximately \$26,000 for a conceptual planning and design for the shared use trail from Needham Junction to the Dover line. The information to be gained from this study will be critical in the Board's determination as to whether to recommend to the Town a lease of the rail corridor with the MBTA. Having this information soon will allow the Town to plan for the possibility of presenting an article to the 2013 Annual Town Meeting, and will also provide an opportunity for the Bay Colony Rail Association to begin its fundraising efforts. It is anticipated that this project – if implemented – will also be a public/private partnership.

I look forward to discussing these projects with the Committee at your convenience.

# INITIAL ELIGIBILITY PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

**DUE BY DECEMBER 1**

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM**  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**  
 c/o Park & Recreation Department  
 1471 Highland Avenue, Town Hall  
 Needham, MA 02492  
 www.needhamma.gov/CPC

1. **Applicant:** Board of Selectmen, Town Manager.  
Park and Recreation Commission
- Submission Date:** August 15, 2012
2. **Applicant's Address, Phone Number and Email:**

Town Hall -- 1471 Highland Avenue  
 Needham, MA 02492

**Contact Name:** Kate Fitzpatrick
3. **Purpose:**  
 (Please select all that apply)
  - ☐ Open Space
  - ☐ Community Housing
  - ☐ Historic Preservation
  - ☒ Recreation
4. **Project Name:** Needham Greene's Field Project
5. **Project Location/Address/Ownership (Control):** The property is located on Pickering Street and Great Plain Avenue. The parcel is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen and is managed by the Park and Recreation Commission.
6. **Amount Requested:** \$445,000
7. **Estimated Total Project Cost (If Different):** \$495,000
8. **Critical Dates:**

The Greene's Field play structure was removed in 2010. Installation of a new structure is desired as soon as possible. Funding received for field restoration in the fall will enable the project to be implemented in the spring of 2013.

- continued -

**Project Name:** *Needham Greene's Field Project*

**9. Project Summary: In 100 words or less provide a brief summary of the project:**

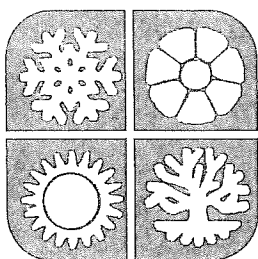
Despite years of continued efforts and attention, the iconic playground structure at Greene's Field was removed in 2010 because it was no longer repairable and past its useful life. The Board of Selectmen created a Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group which has recommended a concept plan for the replacement of the structure, and improvement and layout of the park as a whole. The renovation of the playing field has long been contemplated in the Town's athletic facility planning process, and the playing field is in need of renovation. The proposed project includes a play structure for multiple age groups, site work, irrigation, sod and soil amendments, fencing, backstop and benches, a walking path, and basketball court improvements.

**10. Community Need: In 100 words or less provide a brief statement of the need for and the benefits to the community.**

This comprehensive renovation of the Greene's Field parcel will enhance the usefulness of the park and provide additional enhancement of the downtown area – consistent with community and economic development goals. The park is used by numerous community groups. Its location in the center of Town makes it an attractive gathering spot for both passive and active recreation. The Town's third bi-annual citizen survey confirms the community's desire for recreation improvements – access to recreation facilities was the only major service delivery category in which the Town was below the national benchmark.

A group of volunteers has formed and committed to raising \$50,000 for the project – over \$8,000 has already been raised.

Note: This application enables the Community Preservation Committee to review the request to assess eligibility. You shall be notified by January 1 of your eligibility. If eligible you will be requested to supply additional information by February.



## NEEDHAM PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Needham Town Hall  
1471 Highland Avenue  
Needham, MA 02492

Tel: (781) 455-7521

Fax: (781) 449-4569

Recorded Community Information - (781) 444-7212

Patricia M. Carey, C.P.R.P.  
*Director*

Karen A. Peirce, C.P.R.P.  
*Assistant Director*

### HISTORY OF GREENE'S FIELD BRIEF OVERVIEW August 30, 2011

Town of Needham purchased 3 parcels of land for \$12,000 from Mildred Greene for school purposes in 1912. There is some information indicating that the land was used by the public prior to that, including practice space for the nearby High School (Emery Grover) and a football team.

The Stephen Palmer Elementary School was built in 1914, with a major addition added in 1930. The remainder of the land was used for play space for the school. In 1975, the school was closed and the building portion of the parcel was placed under Selectmen's control. There were some Town Meeting discussions about demolishing the building but in 1979, a 50 year lease was granted for the building. The open space portion remained under the control of the School Committee.

In the late 1980's, the GFWC Needham Women's Club received permission from the School Committee for a community built playground. The architect for this style of playground was Robert Leathers.

In 1990, Town Meeting transferred the jurisdiction of the land to the Board of Selectmen from the School Committee for "park and recreation purposes." The DPW Parks and Forestry Division began to maintain the grounds. The maintenance of the playground structure remained the responsibility of School Buildings and Grounds Department. Park and Recreation handled field administration, as it did for other Selectmen properties with athletic fields.

In 1996, under the recommendations of the Buildings and Grounds Study Committee, the responsibility for maintenance of the playground structure came under Park and Recreation. It was during this time that the School Buildings and Grounds Department became part of the newly created Municipal Building Maintenance Department. It is now known at the Public Facilities Maintenance Department.

By the end of the 1990's, the wooden playground structures around town had been replaced with new equipment, leaving wooden structures at Greene's Field, Newman School and High Rock School. Since that time, the High Rock School playground was removed due to its poor condition. Maintenance continued at Greene's Field and Newman, but recommendations were made to replace both structures, and Greene's Field

has been on the capital budget request list for several years. The swings were replaced in 2003. The Newman PTC has had periodic discussions about the replacement of their structure.

In late 2009, the decision was made to remove the playground structure, but the actual work wasn't done until late 2010. As the structure was built with pressure treated wood with CCA (Chromate Copper Arsenate), specialized demolition was undertaken to prevent the creation of air-born particles, and the soil was tested before and after removal. There are no issues with the soils at this time.

**Current Uses:**

- YMCA after school, Saturday, and summer programs
- Little League spring, summer, fall programs
- Occasional uses by local day cares and Saint Joseph's School
- "sandlot" use of basketball court
- Playground was primarily used by pre-school aged children
- The Great Plain Avenue end of the park is a passive area with benches

TO: Board of Selectmen  
FROM: Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group  
DATE: April 6, 2012  
RE: Recommendation

The Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group was created by the Board of Selectmen at its meeting on April 26, 2011 to: evaluate the entire Greene's Field parcel and make recommendations relative to the alignment of the park, in consideration of use of the park for play, passive recreation, and youth sports, while evaluating options for replacing the play structure with one that is reminiscent of the iconic nature of the prior play structure, is aesthetically pleasing, is suitable for younger children, and is consistent with current standards for play structures.

Greene's Field is a 2.5 acre park bordered by Great Plain Avenue and Pickering Street. The park consists of areas for passive recreation, soccer, youth baseball, basketball, and a playground area. The Greene's Field Play Structure was installed in 1989, through a collaboration of the Needham Women's Club and other community organizations. At that time, the goal was to create a play space that would be iconic in the Town Center and make a statement that children were important to the community. Though originally intended for school-aged children, the playground became a favorite destination for pre-school families. The wooden structure was declared unsafe and removed in 2010.

The Committee met ten times since August 30, 2011. All meetings were posted, and agendas were listed on the Town's website. Some residents attended the initial meeting and shared ideas during a "blue sky" discussion. Those notes appear at the end of this report.

The Committee discussed the positive aspects of park, concerns about the park, and the general layout. The Committee came to the conclusion that the basic layout should remain the same, with three major areas: passive recreation, active sports, and playground. Identified improvements included the following:

#### Passive Recreation

- Create a welcome area
- Install benches and picnic tables
- Install a gazebo (tentative)
- Include gardens (Xeriscape)
- Repair drainage system
- Add a walking path to perimeter, working it safely around other park features
- Replace fencing along Warren Street backyards

#### Active sports & Recreation

- Apply an asphalt overlay on basketball court and install new backboards
- Install an irrigation system
- Renovate natural turf (possible sod rather than seed) and try to move the field to a higher level of maintenance when strong turf has grown in

- Renovate backstop and player bench area

Note: some of these recommendations are included in a future capital request under Athletic Field Master Plan.

### Play Structure

The primary mission for the committee was to recommend how the former playground might be replaced. The Committee met with three vendors to learn about playground equipment. Individual members of the Committee visited a variety of playground sites, focusing on quality and play value, and reported back to committee. The Committee recommends the following design features:

- Greene's Field is an iconic park in the Town Center, and the design should be reflective of the Needham community.
- The structure should have a "nature" feel with natural colors.
- The structure should have features for two distinct age ranges – one that is challenging for younger children and that provides different options from other playgrounds for older children.
- Fencing should be installed around the perimeter of the playground area so that parents can sit and watch their children without fear of the children wandering into the Street.
- The plan should either retain existing trees in their existing location or relocate the trees on the site. The project should provide shade where possible.
- The structure should incorporate accessible features, meeting or exceeding ADA and AAB code requirements.
- A shade shelter or gazebo and picnic tables should be incorporated into the plan, along with benches throughout playground area.

### Financing

The Committee determined that approximately \$150,000 to \$175,000 will be required for equipment, installation, surfacing, fencing, benches, and picnic area features. Financing options include:

- Solely private financing – this option would require that the Town license the property to a non-profit organization and the accept the improvements made (similar to the Fields of Dreams project);
- A combination of private and public financing – this option would require the identification of funds and a Town Meeting appropriation to close the gap between donations and the final cost. This option would also require public procurement; and
- Solely public financing – this option would require identification of funds and Town Meeting appropriation to close the gap between donations and the final cost. This option would also require public procurement.

The Committee recommends that the volunteers who are interested in fundraising be given the opportunity to get started before a final decision is made on the financing plan.

The members of the Committee thank the Board for the opportunity to participate in this exciting project: John Bulian, Alison Borrelli, Larry Cohen, Greg Condon, Sally Dempsey, Dave DiCicco, Amy Franco, Rochelle Goldin, Mary Ann Pierce, Alison Rivers, Andrea Shorthose, Lois Sockol, and staff liaisons Ed Olsen, Patty Carey, and Nicole DiCicco.



**Proposed Charge**  
**Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group**  
**April 21, 2011**

The Board of Selectmen and Park and Recreation Commission are seeking candidates for the Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group.

Background

Greene's Field is a 2.5 acre park bordered by Great Plain Avenue and Pickering Street. The park consists of areas for passive recreation, soccer, youth baseball, basketball, and a playground area.

The Greene's Field Play Structure was installed in 1989, through a collaboration of the Needham Women's Club and other community organizations. At that time, the goal was to create a play space that would be iconic in the Town Center and make a statement that children were important to the community. Though originally intended for school-aged children, the playground became a favorite destination for pre-school families.

The wooden structure was declared unsafe and removed in 2010.

Charge

The charge of the Greene's Field Play Structure Working Group is to:

Evaluate the entire Greene's Field parcel and make recommendations relative to the alignment of the park, in consideration of use of the park for play, passive recreation, and youth sports, while evaluating options for replacing the play structure with one that is reminiscent of the iconic nature of the prior play structure, is aesthetically pleasing, is suitable for younger children, and is consistent with current standards for play structures.

Composition

The Working Group shall consist of 11 members. When practicable, the committee should include representatives of service organizations which have participated in public private partnerships to create or renovate playgrounds in the Town of Needham, representatives of users of the playground, individuals with demonstrated experience in fundraising.

Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings of the Working Group and to provide comment, feedback and suggestions.

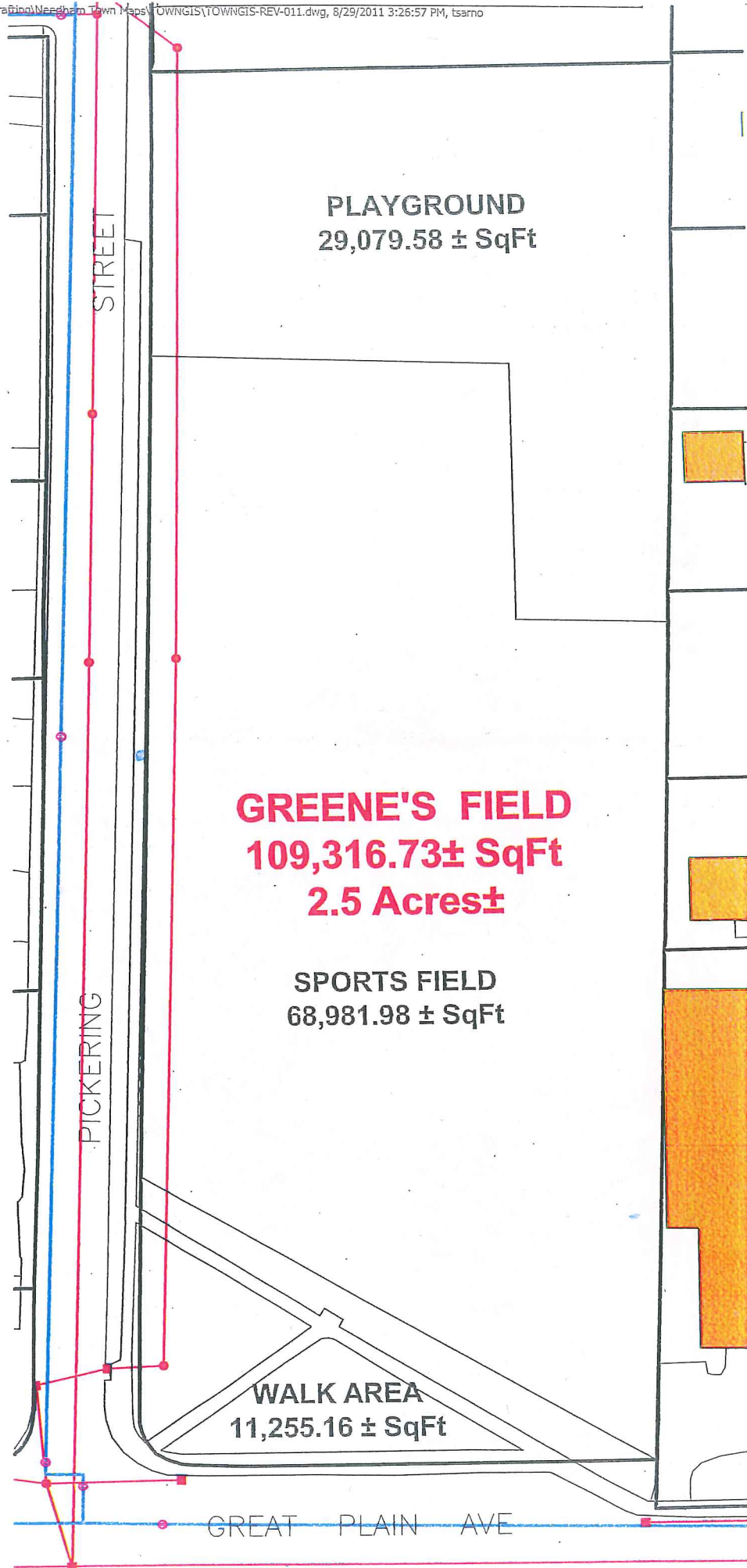
PICKERING STREET

PICKERING

**GREENE'S FIELD**  
**109,316.73± SqFt**  
**2.5 Acres±**

GREAT PLAIN AVE







							Survey XXX Draft TGS  Check ALD
GREENE'S FIELD GREAT PLAIN AVENUE/PICKERING STREET SCALE: 1"=50'      DATE: MARCH 28, 2012 GREAT PLAN AVÉNUe and PICKERING STREET NEEDHAM, MA							Job No. XXXXXXXXX
Prepared for: ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS NEEDHAM, MA 02492							Sheet 1 of X Drawg. No.
NEEDHAM DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING DIVISION  470 Dedham Avenue, Needham, MA 02492 (781) 435-7538							
DATE	REVISION	BY					

DATE REVISION

